

Medicaid Matters

TFQ Stakeholders get first look at clinical support tool in December

Several months of collaboration, planning and effort paid off in December when members of the Together for Quality (TFQ) Stakeholder Council got their first look at the proposed electronic clinical support tool that is at the center of the Alabama Medicaid Agency's effort to move toward a more patient-centered, coordinated health information system.

"We have been able to accomplish so much in such a short space of time due to the hard work of the various workgroups," said Kim Davis-Allen, TFQ project manager. "The clinical workgroup has spent a lot of time designing screens and prioritizing needed information. One of their suggestions has been the creation of the summary screen which will at first glance provide key patient information, alerts and updates. This design allows the physician to then select an area to see more in-depth information."

Now with a tangible product in hand, TFQ stakeholders and others involved in the Medicaid transformation initiative will work to launch a pilot project in early 2008 while taking steps to create a system to exchange information on clients shared by various state health and human service agencies, according to Davis-Allen.



The next step is to work with Patient 1st physicians in 11 pilot counties to test the effectiveness of the electronic clinical support tool, care management or a combination of the two, Davis-Allen said. The components will be piloted in a mix of urban and rural areas to test and determine which component provides the best service for the patient.

"We want to see what works best to achieve the best outcome for the patient," she said.

Physicians in Bullock and Pike counties will concentrate on the coordinated care component of the project while physicians in Jefferson, Winston and Houston counties will work strictly with the clinical support tool. Providers in Tuscaloosa, Lamar, Pickens, Calhoun, Talladega and Montgomery will test both components. The target start date for Bullock and Pike counties is February 1, 2008 with the other counties coming on board later in 2008.

All providers participating in the pilot project will be able to access the electronic clinical support tool using a web browser. At the same time, Medicaid will work with physicians and others to create an interface with select electronic medical record systems so practitioners who have those systems can enhance their own records with the information and alerts available through the electronic support tool.

Special features built into the electronic clinical support tool will help physicians by alerting them to needed actions based on clinical rules. [Click here to see more...](#)



Inside: ♦ Holiday spirit abounds for Agency's "adopted" children and adults
♦ Agency employees attain national CPC certification

Holiday spirit abounds for Agency's "adopted" children and adults

Once again Medicaid personnel have opened their hearts (and wallets) to help dozens of people have a merry holiday, contributing more than \$1,777 in gifts, food and toiletries for Montgomery-area children and adults during the Agency's holiday charity drive.

"Adopting" individuals and several families to ensure there are no sad faces on Christmas morning has become a tradition for Agency employees. Many employees purchased specific gifts from children's wish lists and donated money through Agency fundraisers to make sure the spirit of Christmas is felt by 44 children and adults.

Kim Davis-Allen, Director of TFQ and the Medical Services Division and chair of the project since its inception several years ago, and members of her staff spent weekends and nights shopping to fill the wish lists. Other agency employees helped by making contributions, identifying those needing help, wrapping presents or delivering food boxes and gifts.

"This is one of the most rewarding aspects of my job and I appreciate all that the Agency's employees do to make Christmas a reality for these individuals," said Davis-Allen. "This effort is truly a project that the entire Agency becomes involved with and demonstrates the true heart of the Agency."



Laconey Landon and Karen Green's son, Mick, help load gifts for delivery on December 21.

Agency employees attain national professional coders certification



From left, Mary Timmerman, Stacey Robinson and Sandra Shaw

Medicaid employees Mary Timmerman, Stacey Robinson and Sandra Shaw have earned credentials as Certified Professional Coders after completing a training course through the American Academy of Professional Coders (AAPC) and passing the national certification exam.

"This is a significant accomplishment and indicative of the exemplary efforts of these employees," said Medicaid Commissioner Carol Steckel. "I congratulate them on achieving this certification."

All three will immediately put their new knowledge to work for Medicaid. A 24-year state employee, Timmerman oversees the development and review of Medicaid policies in 20 program areas as Associate Director of the Medical Support Unit. As part of their duties, nurse analysts Shaw and Robinson review medical records for the Agency's Provider Review Unit. They have been Medicaid employees for 16 years and 1 ½ years respectively.

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